

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
CONTRACTS COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
FEBRUARY 9, 2016**

**ATTENDANCE:** Jeanette Herron, Co-Chair; Jack Banta, Co-Chair; Milta Feliciano, Alfredo Castillo, Anthony Paoletto, Richard Salter

**OTHERS:** Council Member Jose Casco, Council Member Denese Taylor-Moye, Atty. Mark Anastasi, Angel dePara, CAO; Atty. Kevin Reynolds, Reynolds Strategy Group; Brenda Sisco, Reynolds Strategy Group.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Council Member Herron called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

**APPROVAL OF COMMITTEE MINUTES FOR JANUARY 4, 2016**  
**(SPECIAL MEETING)**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 4, 2015 SPECIAL MEETING.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**53-15 Proposed State Lobbyist Services Agreement with the Reynolds Strategy Group LLC**

Atty. Anastasi came forward to present the idea. He distributed copies of an amendment. He said that this items. The amount was reduced from \$55,000 to \$45,000 and the length of time was corrected from two to one option years.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER FELICIANO MOVED TO SUBSTITUTE BY AMENDMENT A REVISED STATE LOBBYING SERVICES AGREEMENT AS ATTACHED TO A MEMO FROM THE CITY ATTORNEY'S OFFICE DATED FEBRUARY 1, 2016.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

It was noted for the record that the cover letter had a erroneous salutation reading "Dear Ordinance Committee Co-Chairs".

Council Member Taylor-Moye asked if Atty. Reynolds was good with this proposal. Atty. Anastasi said that Atty. Reynolds was and that he was enroute to the meeting.

Council Member Banta asked if there would be a staff member cut or a loss of service. Atty. Anastasi said that he did not expect any issues.

Council Member Feliciano said that it was great that the firm has been working for the City for the last three years, but she was not even aware of their existence. She said that moving forward, she would like to build relationships with these firms.

Council Member Feliciano asked if the City would have to go out to bid for this contract. Atty. Anastasi explained that this was a sole source procurement, so it did not have to go out to bid. The Purchasing Department can approve the contract. He added that the previous administration had believed that the contract still had a one year option left.

Council Member Feliciano asked why there wasn't some kind of bid. Atty. Anastasi said that the City had gone out to bid on this three years ago. Council Member Feliciano said that perhaps the City could have gotten the services for even less. She said that the City should open this for bid even though the session has started and the contract expired in June. Discussion followed.

Council Member Feliciano said that she felt that the administration needs to realize that the Council Members are elected by the tax payers and residents to work in their best interest. Other companies might offer a better rate.

Council Member Castillo asked why the lobbyist didn't know the contract was expiring. Atty. Anastasi explained that it is up to the City to renew the contract and that the City created the problem.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she had history with Atty. Reynolds and thought that he was doing a good job, despite the major cut in payment. She said that while it is too late this year, but the Council should consider going out to bid for the next year.

Atty. Reynolds, who had just arrived, came forward and said that his firm had been aware that the contract had expired, but the prior administration had believed that there was still a one year option left. Once the new administration took office, the firm contacted the administration about the contract. He pointed out that this legislative session is a short session.

Council Member Castillo pointed out that Atty. Reynolds represented a number of different clients. He said that Bridgeport needs to have Bridgeport representatives working for the City. Other cities, such as Hartford and New Haven receive more funding than Bridgeport does. Atty. Reynolds explained that his client portfolio did not include any other municipalities. He added that some of that funding was directed to the other larger municipalities because of legislative seniority and the leadership. The lobbyists don't have as much clout as the leadership. Atty. Anastasi pointed out that both Atty. Reynolds and Ms. Sisco have strong relationships with the legislators. Ms. Sisco said that the new legislators have come in and worked hard to help the City get what they needs. She then gave an overview of the process and said that the current Bridgeport legislative delegation was working together extremely well.

Council Member Feliciano asked about the fees clause. Atty. Anastasi said that it was a standard clause. Atty. Reynolds said that he had never charged the fees. Council Member Feliciano asked who would approve the charges. Atty. Anastasi said that the Mayor or the CAO would approve the fees.

Council Member Feliciano asked for an example of how the lobbyists had assisted the delegates in the past. Atty. Reynolds gave one example as the recent car tax where they realized that Bridgeport would not benefit from the proposal and were able to help propose a remedy for that. He also mentioned the proposed energy loop, which was expected to be approved, but at the last minute there was some unexpected opposition. He gave the details on the two items of how the delegates supported those items.

Council Member Taylor-Moye said that she would like to clarify her earlier statement that this was the time for the Contracts Committee to look into the process for bidding.

Atty. Anastasi cautioned everyone that while he understood the desire to have a local firm as a lobbyist, it was important to realize that much of the work is done through the relationships and knowledge. Hiring local is a great thing, but it might not be the best thing for Bridgeport.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA MOVED TO APPROVE 53-15 PROPOSED STATE LOBBYIST SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH THE REYNOLDS STRATEGY GROUP LLC AS AMENDED.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER PAOLETTO MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER BANTA SECONDED.**

**\*\* THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

S. L. Soltes  
Telesco Secretarial Services